



SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITIONS OF (MARGINALIZED) CONSTRUCTION WOMEN WORKERS IN ANDHRA PRADESH: (WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO GUNTUR CITY)

Maddela Miriam

Research Scholar, Department of Economics, Acharya Nagarjuna University, Guntur, Andhra Pradesh, India

ABSTRACT

Construction activities are an integral part of the Indian economy and have attracted considerable amount of finances in both the public and private sectors. Investment in construction industry is very high and it is a flourishing industry that has accumulated immense wealth in the hands of the builders resulting in the formation of a powerful builders lobby in the country. It is the second largest unorganized sector of industry employing more than eight million workers. It is one of the few industries in which operations are discontinuous making the industry a mobile one. The industry uses several types of materials - steel, wood, bricks, cement, lime, asbestos, toxic chemicals etc. in large quantities. The origin of the construction industry dates from the origin of civilization. Rapid urbanization leads to acute need of housing and growth of industry which require massive infrastructure including roads, bridges, building of factories, railways etc. Due to these requirements, the construction industry stands out as one of the major economic activities. Construction activity is also consistently providing a substantial contribution to the national income. The objective of the present study is to analyze the socio-economic, living conditions and awareness about their rights of Construction women workers in Guntur City.

KEY WORDS: *Unorganized Sector, Construction Workers, Marginalized Women.*

INTRODUCTION

The increase in investment and income in urban modern sectors of developing countries has attracted labour force to these urban centers resulting in phenomenal increase in urban population and labour force. Given the disparities between income in agricultural and non-agricultural activities and between rural and urban areas; location of industries, expansion of government administration in the wake of independence and concentration of opportunities for acquiring education and skills in urban centers have played an important role in attracting the migrants. Due to lack of intensive type of industrialization, low levels of absorption capacity of the modern urban sector was assumed and contributed to mass urban unemployment, underemployment and extreme poverty in urban areas of the Third World, causes to dual markets in urban economy.

The pressure of labour supply gets manifested in the proliferation of certain unorganized, frequently sporadic occupations characterized by low skill, low productivity and meager incomes. This dualistic nature of urban economy has been used as a frame of analysis of economic structures and markets.

The term 'unorganized' is often used in the Indian context to refer to the vast numbers of women and men engaged in different forms of employment. These forms include home-based work (for example: rolling papads and beedis), self-

employment (for example: selling vegetables), employment in household enterprises, small units, on land as agricultural workers, labour on construction sites, domestic work, and a myriad other forms of casual or temporary employment. They do marry, bear children, and get old but under these phases of life they live the same life. They suffer from many problems like unhygienic environment, no medical facilities, and no awareness regarding law.

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In the post-liberalization period, the construction industry in the country is witnessing many structural changes which will radically transform the industry as well as construction labour market. The industry, which hitherto has been based on labour intensive technology providing ready source of employment will become technology intensive and mechanise, leading to elimination of substantial workforce.

Some of the characteristics of construction industry are:

- 1) High economic vulnerability due to the double combination or irregular and unstable employment and consequent high mobility on the one hand and their utilization only in the lowest grade of job on the other,
- 2) High proportion of female labour and frequent employment of whole family or couples;
- 3) Ignorance, poverty illiteracy and poor health;
- 4) Lack of unionization due to mobility;
- 5) Lack of opportunity for training, skills upgrading and literacy for employed people and of basic education for the children.

Legislations to Protect Unorganized Workers

In India, the government has adopted various policies of welfare about workers through enactment of legislations and creation of welfare funds and boards. Some of the important legislations are as follow.

- Workmen's Compensation Act, 1923
- The Trade Union Act, 1926
- Minimum Wages Act, 1948
- The Maternity Benefit Act, 1961
- The Equal Remuneration Act, 1976
- Bonded labor System (Abolition) Act, 1976
- Contract labor (Regulation and Abolition) Act, 1970
- Inter State Migrant Workmen Act, 1979
- Building and Construction workers Act, 1996
- Beedi and cigar workers welfare fund Act, 1976
- The Child Labor (Prohibition and Regulation Act, 1986
- The Payment of Gratuity Act, 1972
- The Payment of Wages Act, 1936
- The Employers' Provident Fund and Miscellaneous Provisions Act, 1952
- The Employees State Insurance Act, 1948
- The Payment of Bonus Act, 1965 Child labor (Abolition and Rehabilitation) Bill, 2006,

Besides, the first National Commission on labour Report 1969 recommended various suggestions on the working conditions in unorganized sector workers. The Second National Commission on labor was set up in 1999. The implementation of labor policy however, is the responsibility of the state governments. A large number of workers in the unorganized sector have almost no social security. (Suriyan, 2009).

After the state bifurcation, the Guntur city has playing very important role, Geographically it was located mid of the state and the Government of Andhra Pradesh announced the new capital of Andhra Pradesh was Amaravathi, it was very near to the Guntur city, and the large number of construction are taking place, the large number of women workers are engaged in this sector only.

NEED FOR THE STUDY

Expanding productive employment is central to sustained poverty reduction as labor is the main asset for majority of the poor. In Andhra Pradesh considerable number of workers are in the organized sector. In other words, organized workers form only around 5.5 per cent while unorganized workers constitute 94.5 per cent of the total in Andhra Pradesh. The vast majority of workforce including agricultural labor, construction labor and labor in traditional leather tanning, handloom, fishing, forestry, salt making, household industry etc., as also village artisans, urban informal workers coming under the general categories of unorganized sector are wholly out of any reckoning into various statutory laws in the state. These workers are unprotected by legislation and most of them tend to be poor. This city Geographically located in the mid of the state, here large number of construction works are going on and many women workers also engaged in this sector and particularly in Guntur city. Hence it is urgency to study the socio-economic conditions and their problems in the selected area.

OBJECTIVE

The objective of the study is to analyze the socio-economic and living conditions of Construction women workers in Guntur City.

METHODOLOGY

The Office of Assistant Commissioner of Labour and other sources are consulted for data. There are five labour circles namely Chuttagunta, Arundelpet, R.T.C.Colony, Lakshmiapuram and Housing Board Colony in Guntur City. These areas are purposively selected for the present study.

The data for the present study have been collected from both primary and secondary sources. The secondary data have been collected from both published and unpublished sources of various Government Offices viz office of the Labour Commissioner, Guntur, Offices of Assistant Labour Commissioner of different areas in the city. Office of Census of India; Directorate of Economics and statistics, Guntur office of Municipality and Town Planning.

The Primary data have been collected from 100 samples of construction women workers working in Guntur City through a specially well designed schedules to know their socio economic conditions, income and employment situations of the Construction women workers in the study area using the convenience sampling technique.

RESULTS & DISCUSSION**Table - 1 Socio-Economic & Demographic Characteristics**

Sl.No	Age	No of Respondents	Percentage
1	Below 25	9	9.0
	25-30	29	29.0
	30-35	31	31.0
	35-40	13	13.0
	Above 40	18	18.0
	Total	100	100.0
2	Marital Status	No of Respondents	Percentage
	Married	85	85.0
	Widower/Widow	13	13.0
	Divorced	1	1.0
	Separate	1	1.0
	Total	100	100.0
3	Education	No of Respondents	Percentage
	Literate	11	11.0
	Primary	2	2.0
	Middle/Higher	2	2.0
	10 pass/ Inter	2	2.0
	illiterate	83	83.0
	Total	100	100.0
4	Type of family	No of Respondents	Percentage
	Joint	15	15.0
	Nuclear	85	85.0
	Total	100	100.0
5	Type of Residency	No of Respondents	Percentage
	Own	46	46.0
	Rent	54	54.0
	Total	100	100.0
6	Type of House	No of Respondents	Percentage
	RCC	32	32.0
	Kutchha	68	68.0
	Total	100	100.0
7	Social Security	No of Respondents	Percentage
	White card	84	84.0
	Without card	16	16.0
	Total	100	100.0
8	Caste Category	No of Respondents	Percentage
	B.C	45	45.0
	S.C	39	39.0
	S.T	16	16.0
	Total	100	100.0
9	Religion	No of Respondents	Percentage
	Hindu	65	65.0
	Muslim	17	17.0
	Christian	18	18.0
	Total	100	100.0

Source: Primary data

Table - 2
Work Related Information

Sl.No	Nature of Work	No of Respondents	Percentage
1	Unpaid Family work	0	0.0
	Permanent	0	0.0
	Temporary	100	100.0
	Total	100	100.0
Employment Status			
2	Seasonal	12	12.0
	Causal	88	88.0
	Total	100	100.0
Place of Work			
3	Slum	28	28.0
	Non-slum	72	72.0
	Total	100	100.0
Reason for Opting			
4	Poverty	66	66.0
	Livelihood	34	34.0
	More Income	0	0.0
	Total	100	100.0
Are you main Worker in your family			
5	Yes	15	15.0
	No	85	85.0
	Total	100	100.0
Job Opportunity			
6	Personal Approach	15	15.0
	Mastery	28	28.0
	Mediator	57	57.0
	Total	100	100.0
No. of hours work in a day			
7	7 hours	1	1.0
	8 hours	23	23.0
	9 hours	34	34.0
	10 hours	42	42.0
	Total	100	100.0
No. of Days work in a month			
8	20 days	42	42.0
	22 days	27	22.0
	24 days	19	19.0
	25 days	12	12.0
	Total	100	100.0
No. of months work in a year			
9	10 months	54	54.0
	11 months	26	26.0
	12 months	20	20.0
	Total	100	100.0
Mode of Payment			
10	Daily	26	26.0
	Weekly	74	74.0
	Total	100	100.0

11	Timely payment	No of Respondents	Percentage
	Satisfied	73	73.0
	Moderately	27	27.0
	Total	100	100.0
12	Monthly Income (Individual)	No of Respondents	Percentage
	Below 8000	24	24.0
	8000 - 10000	46	46.0
	Above 10000	30	30.0
	Total	100	100.0

Source: Primary data

Table - 3

Awareness levels of the respondents on different Acts

Sl. No	Acts	No of Respondents	
		Aware	Not aware.
1	Payment of wages Act 1936	6 (6.0%)	94 (94.0%)
2	Payment of Minimum wage Act 1948	0 (0.0%)	100 (100.0%)
3	Work man's Compensation Act 1923	0 (0.0%)	100 (100.0%)
4	Child labour Act 1986	9 (9.0%)	91 (91.0%)
5	Maternity Benefits Act 1979	0 (0.0%)	100 (100.0%)
6	Bonded labour Act 1986	0 (0.0%)	100 (100.0%)

Source: Primary data

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

1. Demographic Profile

Table 1. Demographic profile of the sample respondents. It is found that majority (31.0 per cent) of the respondents were in between 30-35 years of age, followed by 29.0 percent of the respondents were in between 25-30 years of age. Majority (85.0 per cent) of the respondents were married, 13 per cent of the respondents were Widows and only 1.0 percent of the respondents were divorced and separate. Majority (83.0 per cent) of the respondents were illiterate and the rest of the respondents were literate. Majority (85.0 per cent) of the respondents are in nuclear families and the rest of the respondents are joint families. More than half of the respondents (54.0 per cent) are living in rented houses and the remaining (46.0 per cent) of the respondents have Owen houses. Regarding the type of house, more than half of the respondents (68.0 per cent) are in Kutcha house, followed by 32 per cent of the respondents are in RCC (Pucca) house. Majority (84.0 per cent) of the respondents have White cards and the rest of the respondents didn't have any type of Social Security. Nearly half of the responds (45.0 per cent) were B.C's, followed by 39 per cent of the respondents were S.C's and only 16 per cent of the respondents were S.T's. Majority (65.0 per cent) of the respondents were Hindus, followed by 18 percent of the respondents were Christians and 17 per cent of the respondents were Muslims.

2. Finding on Work Related Information

Work related information of the respondents (Table - 2) reveals that all the respondents (100.0 percent) are temporary. Majority (88.0 percent) of the respondents were casual workers and followed by very few (12.0 percent) of the respondents were seasonal workers. Nearly three fourth (72.0 percent) of the respondents are working in non-slum and followed by more than a quarter (28.0 percent) are working in slums. Majority (66.0 percent) of the respondents reason for opting this work poverty and followed by 34 per cent of the respondents reason for opting this work for their livelihood. Majority (85.0 percent) of the respondents are not a main workers in their families and rest (15.0 percent) of the respondents are main bread earners in their families. More than half (57.0 percent) of the respondents were getting job

opportunity through mediator and followed by 28 per cent of the respondents were getting job opportunity through mastery and only 15 per cent of the respondents were getting job opportunity through personal approach. Majority (42.0 percent) of the respondents work 10 hours per day, followed by 34 per cent of the respondents work 9 hours per day and nearly one fourth (23 percent) of the respondents are working only 8 hours per day. Majority (42.0 percent) of the respondents stated that on an average they work for 20 days per month and followed by more than one fourth (27.0 percent) of the respondents they work for 22 days per month and 19 per cent of the respondents they work for 24 days per month and only few (12.0 percent) of the respondents they work for 25 days per month. More than half (54.0 percent) of the respondents work 10 months in a year, followed by more than one fourth (26.0 percent) of the respondents work 11 months in a year and 20 per cent of the respondents work 12 months in a year. Nearly one third (74.0 percent) of the respondents stated that they received their payment Weekly and the rest (26.0 percent) of the respondents said that received their payment Daily. Nearly three fourth (73.0 percent) of the respondents satisfied for timely payment, followed by more than one fourth (27.0 percent) of the respondents said that for timely payment moderately. Regarding the earnings nearly half of the respondents (46.0 percent) are earning between 8,000 – 10,000 per month, followed by 30 per cent of the respondents are earning above 10,000 per month and nearly one fourth (24.0 percent) of the respondents are earning less than 8,000 per month

3. Finding on Awareness of Respondents on different Social Security Acts

It is found that, all most all (94.0 percent) of the respondents are not aware about Payment of Wages Act 1936 and only very few (6.0 percent) of the respondents are aware of this act, followed by 100 per cent of sample respondents were not aware about Payment of Minimum Wage Act 1948, Regarding the statement Work Man's Compensation Act 1923. Majority (91.0 percent) of the respondents are not aware about Child Labour Act 1986 and only 9 per cent of the respondents are aware about act. All the respondents (100.0 percent) are not aware about Maternity Benefits Act

1979 and Bonded Labour Act 1986. It can be found that majority of sample respondents are not aware of different social security acts which is mentioned in the questionnaire.

SUGGESTIONS

- It is found that, majority of the respondents are not aware about the labour Laws. So, Government should be conduct awareness training programmes for construction women workers for their social security.
- It is found that, majority of the respondents stated that, their working hours is too hard. So, Government should be taken necessary actions on contractors to maintain minimum working hours at work place.
- It is found that, majority of the respondents they don't have full employment in a month, so, there is a need to increase man days of work for construction women workers for better living.
- It is found that more than half of the respondents are working 10 months in a year, the rest the months they don't have employment. So, Government should be taken necessary action to provide employment throughout the year for construction women workers for better standard of living.

CONCLUSION

Today there is an urgent need to pay attention to the welfare of the construction labour. It is the moral responsibility of the government, developmental organizations, intellectuals, social scientists and policy makers to ensure that the concrete action should be taken to uplift the quality of work life of women construction workers, also create a congenial work environment at the work place.

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